

# **Share Fair Abstracts**

**National Extension Family Life  
Specialists Pre-Conference at the  
NCFR annual conference**

**November 7, 2006  
Minneapolis, MN**

**Title:** Atendiendo Familias Latinos: How to best serve Latino families

**Author:** Andrew O. Behnke, North Carolina State University

**Email:** andrew\_behnke@ncsu.edu

**Abstract:** Considering the growing Latino population in the U.S. this presentation will focus on factors to improve extension specialist's work and involvement with Latino families. Based on the author's recent literature review of best practices, participants will gain a basic understanding of key issues for Latino parents and their families, effective recruitment and retaining of families, and how to empower parents within their communities. They will also learn about Latino diversity in the U.S. and the role of collaboration with key partners to improve service delivery and buy in. Handouts and common phrases for working with families will be provided.

**Title:** Extension Medical Home Connect Project

**Author:** Karen DeBord, North Carolina State University

**Email:** karen\_debord@ncsu.edu

**Abstract:** Pediatricians in North Carolina are seeking community-based assistance with parenting issues (NC Pediatric Society/AAP NC Chapter Mental/School Health meeting January 2006). Issues that relate less to physical growth and illness and more to social development and behavior absorb an inordinate amount of time during child check-ups. Mental health referrals are on the rise, yet the mental health system in North Carolina has become dismantled due to policy and funding issues at the community level. Researchers have found that infants do experience mental health issues and that their mental health status directly correlates with the quality of the parent-infant relationship (Huff, 2004). While there is definitely a role for mental health professionals in the area of intervention in infant mental health, family life educators play an even bigger role in the area of prevention and education. Forging partnerships with pediatricians and family practices so that medical professionals will begin to use and refer parents to Extension as a key resource for families is the objective of this project. The results of a pediatric survey will be shared in addition to the results of five pilot projects between Extension and a pediatric practice.

**Title:** Block Fest: Young children learn math and science through block play

**Author:** Harriet Shaklee, University of Idaho

**Email:** hshaklee@uidaho.edu

**Abstract:** Research shows that children build number and math skills from an early age. Studies also show that play is a natural learning lab where children try new concepts, and that block play provides a rich environment for math learning such counting, equality, addition and subtraction, patterns, volume and area, and measurement. University of Idaho Extension developed Block Fest as a hands-on block building educational tool for young children and their families, bringing information about early math learning to communities of all sizes. Evaluation data shows that the block play format provided an effective learning environment for children and parents alike.

**Title:** Innovative Family Life Programming in Arkansas

**Authors:** James P. Marshall

University of Arkansas CES

**Email:** jpmarshall@uaex.edu

H. Wallace Goddard,

University of Arkansas CES

wgoddard@uaex.edu

**Abstract:** The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service has developed three new family life resources, based on the best research, to assist individuals with parenting, personal well-being, and marriage strengthening.

The *Parenting Journey* is based on the National Extension Parent Education Model. The six dimensions and 29 critical practices in the model become 6 communities and 19 stops on the parenting journey. This innovative introduction to parenting is supported with 7 “Travel Guides”, a DVD, an online assessment, and a wealth of additional information on the website.

The *Personal Journey* is based on discoveries in personal well-being, especially the summary of research by Seligman (2002). The Personal Journey provides simple, practical tips for greater happiness and effectiveness. It will be supported by web information and activities.

Cultivating a good marriage is like two people growing a healthy garden. Both require work and neither happens by chance. The *Marriage Garden* provides couples with practical tools and insights into strengthening their marriage relationships. The design of this program includes a summary folder and a wealth of supporting web resources.

**Title:** Updates to the Intentional Harmony: Managing Work and Life Curriculum

**Author:** Angela Wiley, Ph.D., University of Illinois

**Email:** awiley@ad.uiuc.edu

**Abstract:** *Intentional Harmony: Managing Work and Life* is a research-based program developed by University of Illinois Extension staff to help people manage work and personal lives. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of working Americans—single or coupled, parents or not, who struggle to create harmony in their lives. The curriculum has a flexible, dynamic format organized into six different workshops, 1-2 hours each, which can be presented separately, or as a series. We will introduce updates and expansions (i.e., handouts for empty nest working couples and employed parents of special needs children) and demonstrate the dynamic facilitators’ website.

**Title:** Parenting Partners—When Couples Become Parents  
**Author:** Debbie McClellan, University of Illinois Extension  
**Email:** dmccllell@uiuc.edu

**Abstract:** During the transition to parenthood, many couples experience stress, conflict and a drop in satisfaction with their relationship. A series of twelve, two-page newsletters titled *Parenting Partners* were developed to assist couples with relationship issues and distributed to over 300 families in east central Illinois. Evaluation data was collected from couples who received the newsletters as an insert in age paced parenting newsletters and from control couples who received only the age paced parenting newsletters. Although responses were fairly comparable, the couples receiving *Parenting Partners* reported some positive changes that support additional consideration of this method of reaching couples.

**Title:** Weaving Family Life Education into Training for Family-Based Businesses  
**Author:** Charlotte Shoup Olsen, Kansas State University  
**Email:** colsen@ksu.edu

**Abstract:** A family-based business encompasses the family system oriented toward security and nurturance, the business system demanding productivity, and the ownership system seeking a return on investment. Farm families often identify human relationships as the weakest link in each system. A family systems approach to family-based businesses has resulted in a family life specialist, an ag economist, a family therapist, and an ag educator teaming up to provide comprehensive training that focuses on the farm family system in making sound business decisions. Project impacts over a three-year period and training materials adaptable to other family-based businesses will be shared.

**Title:** Turning Points for Families  
**Author:** Denise J. Brandon, University of Tennessee Extension  
**Email:** dbrandon@utk.edu

**Abstract:** This initiative focuses on unstable families or those that are at risk for instability. Educational programs emphasize parenting and relationship skills. Types of families targeted with educational programs include

- Parents whose children have been removed because of neglect or abuse
- Teen parents
- Relatives raising dependent children
- Divorcing parents
- Stepparents

Recommended Extension curricula were identified to address these audiences and a grid matching curricula with recommended parenting behaviors was developed to help Extension Agents identify resources that will meet the needs of their audience members. An evaluation instrument based on Judith Myers-Walls materials was developed.

**Title:** eXtension *Just in Time Parenting*

**Authors:** Aaron Ebata, PI, University of Illinois at Urbana - Champaign

Pat Nelson, co-PI, University of Delaware

Andrew Behnke, North Carolina State University

Don Bower, University of Georgia

Diana DelCampo, New Mexico State University

Ted Futris, University of Georgia

Sally Martin, University of Nevada, Reno

Lesia Oesterreich, Iowa State University

Lenna Ontai-Grzebik, University of California

Dave Riley, University of Wisconsin

Susan Walker, University of Maryland

**Email:** ptnelson@udel.edu

**Abstract:** Capitalizing on the teachable moment, eXtension's *Just in Time Parenting (JITP)* team is transforming state research-based age-paced newsletters into a unified national parenting resource on an interactive internet platform. The expected public launch date: Spring 2007.

We are seeking partners to (1) publicize the interactive web resources, (2) distribute hard copies to at-risk families, and (3) expand the series from prenatal - teen years. If eXtension JITP could increase the impact of your work, join us in moving these dynamic technology-enhanced resources forward – with the capacity for bringing Extension's best to all parents!

**Title:** Teen Talk "Take and Teach" Lessons for Parent or Parent & Teen Groups

**Authors:** Colleen Gengler, University of Minnesota Extension Service

Jodi Dworkin, University of Minnesota Extension Service

Kathleen Olson, University of Minnesota Extension Service

**Email:** cgengler@umn.edu

**Abstract:** University of Minnesota Extension Family Relations staff members have developed research based "take and teach" lessons on bullying, peer relationships and teen decision making about risky behaviors. Everything professionals or volunteers need to facilitate a parent or parent/teen group is on one CD including lesson guide and research background for the facilitator, parent handouts and activities, resource lists for facilitators and parents, evaluation tool and PowerPoint presentations. Presenters will discuss: how topics were identified, content, the process of reviewing research and incorporating a research base into lessons, lesson format, pilot testing and the multiple ways to use the lessons.